

The BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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MOTHER AND CHILDREN

From painting by Sir Thos. Lawrence

Mother's Fairy Godmother

BY DAISY D. STEPHENSON

THE Happy Thoughts' class meeting was over. It had been specially called in deference to the pastor's request that the girls lend their efficient aid in making the Mothers' Day service a success. After a conference with their capable young teacher, they had agreed upon their duties for the coming Sunday.

"Everybody wear a white dress," reminded the hostess-president, Laurel Boyd.

Grace Gordon summed it up on her fingers. "Wear white, give out carnations at the door, usher the mothers to reserved seats, and sing. Sounds easy and pleasant. Pass the fudge for Kitty's sake. She'll be put off the basket ball team if she puts on another pound."

Lucy Arnold obliged after a brief skirmish with an indignant Kitty. Then from a foot-stool in the corner spoke the quietest girl.

"Grace said our part for Mothers' Day

was easy and pleasant, and it is," Polly Thorne's soft voice revealed a new quality that held the attention of the girls. "I've been thinking—" here she realized that all eyes were focused on her, and had an attack of stage fright.

But Laurel took her hand impulsively, urging, "Out with this idea you're concealing from us, Polly-doodle. When our willingest worker has a happy thought, we're on tip-toe."

"Well, couldn't we truly do something for our mothers?" was Polly's unexpected query. Her tone was half pleading. "You see, I stopped to call on that new girl on my way over. She hopes to join us very soon. She lost her mother just before they moved here." Polly's dark eyes were misty, and the expression on the fire-lit faces was suddenly grave. Even Kitty lost her appetite momentarily,—Kitty who accepted her mother and all favors of fortune as a matter of course.

"She's so lonely and sort of—lost." Polly shook her bright head helplessly,

"Oh, you'll have to imagine it! Why, I can't guess what I'd do without my mother!" she exclaimed in dismay, "and I believe we're all in the same boat."

"You're right. But kindly elucidate. 'Be more explicit,' as Prof. Dean would say," begged Lucy. "Of course we all take our mothers for granted," she added with a flush that the cheery fire was not responsible for. Hers was not the only warm cheek and pricking conscience.

"Well, 'speak up, Ike, and 'spress yo'se'f,'" quoted Kitty so drolly that a ripple of laughter bore away all strain. "Do you mean to make it a sort of extra birthday and give our mothers something?" Kitty was clearly apprehensive. She had spent the last penny of her allowance that day.

"A sort of gift, only not the kind you buy with money." Polly was responding eagerly to the girls' interest. "Sort of plan, you know, so our mothers can have a holiday. Do something they'd enjoy or haven't had time to do lately. Dimpling," she confided, "I know what my mother would say if she could have just one wish granted."

"Tell us!" demanded a breathless chorus.

"Why, see baby Billy!" smiled Polly. "She hasn't seen the cherub since he was a week old. And Eleanor is so happy and so wrapped up in her new home and her two Billys, she doesn't realize how hungry mother is simply to hold that baby!"

"What are you considering? Having the baby sent parcel post?" inquired Lucy soberly.

"If I could, I'd buy mother a ticket tomorrow." Polly's bright face was overcast. "With store repairs and the new garage, daddy can't manage it, though he's aching to. So I wrote Eleanor and begged her to come for a visit. The baby's six months old, and they don't have to worry over every nickel. Eleanor has just forgotten how long it has been for mother."

"Oh, if she'll only come and bring the baby for a Mothers' Day surprise!" Laurel tingled to her finger tips with the anticipation. "Girls, Polly's idea is great. I suppose appreciation, like charity, ought to begin at home. Let's make it a game. Make at least one wish come true for our mothers. All in favor—"

"We are all ayes!" laughed Grace after a unanimous vote that startled the napping black kitten. "I have a notion what will please my mother, and my

vivid imagination warns me that it won't be as easy as giving out carnations and warbling, either!"

"We'll be up-to-date fairy godmothers," murmured Lucy, the romantic.

"It has just occurred to me that maybe fairy godmothers didn't always have such an easy thing of it," declared Kitty comically. "Maybe it was harder work waving a magic wand than we've imagined. Probably the wands were in the way, and heavy to tote around. And very likely they forgot and left them at the last place, like I always do my horrid umbrella!"

When the girls dispersed, each started home with the firm intention of discovering some wish of her mother that a practical godmother might gratify. "Afterwards, we'll meet here and compare notes," Laurel had told them.

"Same girls, same fire, same black kitten—"

"But alas! not the same fudge and popcorn!" mourned Kitty.

"More just as good," promised Laurel generously.

The following week proved so busy for the student-godmothers that there were mere rumors of what transpired in the different homes—hastily snatched confidences that only whetted their curiosity as to what the other Happy Thoughts were accomplishing. To be sure, some interesting events were passed along as news items, to wit:

Polly's married sister, Eleanor, arrived Saturday with a chubby baby, a trunk, and every intention of a month's visit.

Grace Gordon's mother, a singer of exceptional ability, took the trolley to the city Friday. Miss Maria Toomey, circulating news budget for the town, surmised that Mrs. Gordon contemplated shopping, and attending a concert given by a famous contralto.

Lucy Arnold's mother made a number of calls, her first appearance as a lady of leisure in so long, that Miss Toomey hazarded the opinion that old grandpa Arnold had finally died and left the cattle ranch to his youngest.

The Lewises, one and all, from Kitty's busy broker daddy to the inexpressible twin boys, had been seen driving out of town in a new car,—their destination causing wild conjectures on the part of the neighbors. Miss Toomey was certain it meant a wedding or a funeral, for when had all the Lewises been out together, as a whole?

The Mothers' Day service brought out an unprecedented attendance that sunny May morning. The church was fragrant with spicy carnations, and beautiful with the Queens of May in whose honor similar tributes were offered throughout the nation. They were all there, the Happy Thoughts realized, as they assembled on the platform, as sweet as a cluster of white rosebuds. Yes, every mother, from Anne's tired, mouse-like parent in her worn blue suit, to Kitty's pretty

mother in her stylish gown and her corsage of violets. But all wore the same dear radiant expression that only mothers have.

Even careless Kitty was on time when again the girls clustered about Laurel's pine knot fire, this time with their teacher in their midst. Miss Eileen smiled into the bonny faces that showed so clearly the imprint of happy thoughts, and asked confidently, "Was the fairy godmother game a success?"

"Oh, yes!" "Polly was a duck to think of it!" "Though I had to angle a day before I had any luck." This last confession came from Anne, chin cupped in palms, a spoiled black kitten in her lap. "When I think of what the rest of you did, I'm ashamed to tell," she added, but the girls insisted on hearing all about it.

"Of course mother's whole world is—home." Anne's tone was proud and tender. "She's a peculiar solar system, simply revolving about dad and Buddy and me. Oh, if I could only be a truly godmother for two minutes," she burst out longingly, "I'd treat her like Curlylocks! Only she wouldn't even have to 'sew a fine seam.' But being merely mortal, I—" Anne giggled. "You'd never guess. I took charge of the house and Buddy Saturday so she could do exactly as she pleased for once in her life. I told her that was the charm and she mustn't spoil it."

Anne paused as the rest urged her to proceed. "She made a condition that I was not to object to her choice. Between you and me and the cat, I had both hands full and could have used another pair!" She displayed blistered palms. "I expected mother to take a rocker, if she decided to bide at home, and go through that Pike's Peak of *new* magazines she's tried to find time for since last fall. But when I rushed into the back bedroom for something, lo and behold! there was mother humming to herself over a bushel of mending!"

"Anne!" "What did you do?"

"I began scolding, but I'd promised, you know. She vowed it would make her perfectly happy to empty that hobgoblin of a basket. So she had a wonderful vacation, and was so grateful I felt like an angleworm. After this," declared Anne solemnly, "I mean to keep an eye on that mending basket and see that it yawns for emptiness!"

"Good girl, Anne," approved Miss Eileen. "Who is next? Grace, you have the floor."

"So has Laurel," laughed Grace. "My tale is soon told. I knew Madame Lazarri was to sing, so I wrote for a seat, had Aunt Mary meet mother and they had a wonderful visit. Mother has been happy ever after. I intend giving her a day off now and then."

Lucy related how she had grasped the helm of the good ship Household in spite of protests and warnings. "Girls, 'tempest-tossed' expresses my day! I didn't know how dense one's ignorance can be.

I persuaded mother that she was to have faith, and just tat or chat or pet the cat. She elected to return some moss-grown calls, and had a beautiful time."

Laurel had helped her mother entertain friends at luncheon. Out of the pleasant reunion had budded an invitation for her mother to spend a week-end with a teacher friend in a mountain cottage.

Kitty had kept quiet painfully long. "We had a family picnic at grandmother's country home," she explained. "Mother's one wish was to have us all together for a day of fun. Daddy is always too busy for holidays, so I kidnapped him," her eyes sparkled. "Mother has been happy as a sunflower since, and we're going to repeat the effort."

Everybody turned to Polly who had quietly enjoyed the others' reports. "Well, Puss in the corner, you were first to suggest the idea and last to report," Laurel said fondly.

"But you all know. Mother's the gladdest grandmother in America, and I'm the proudest auntie," she said contentedly. "It was fun making wishes come true, wasn't it?"

The quick reply was so perfectly unanimous that it bore witness to the unqualified success of the Fairy Godmother venture, in spite of the yawn of a bored black kitten.

The Harbor of Mother's Eyes

BY AMY CAMPBELL

MY Dad knows lots of fairy tales,
And some he says are true—
Oh we have dandy times at night
When all the chores are through.
We build the open fire first,
And sit and watch it burn,
Then Dad'll chuckle knowingly—
"For which one do you yearn?"

We call for those we love so well,
But one we know is true,
It comes the last because it's best,
Dad says it's always new.
It's all about a lonely ship,
All tired and worldly-wise,
That after years of wandering found
The Harbor of Mother's Eyes.

Dad says such lovely lights were there
Shining 'cross the blue—
"And lads," he says, "some day you'll
know
How much they mean to you."
The first was Purity and Truth
Then Laughter, Love and Prayer,
Sympathy, Wisdom, Intellect,
And oh, so many there.

And Dad was Captain of the ship
That found this haven fair,
And when he saw the kindly lights
He stayed forever there.
He says he knows we'll always keep
To ways both good and wise
If all the lights shine in our hearts
From the Harbor of Mother's Eyes.

A Great Light in the Kingfisher's Nest

BY
FRANCES
MARGARET
FOX



Photograph by L. W. Brownell

THE OPENING OF THE TUNNEL WHICH LED TO
THE PRICKLY NEST AT THE END

FATHER KINGFISHER and Mother Kingfisher had gone fishing. They had gone flying over the treetops to a place far up the river where the water was still and the trees leaned over the stream. They liked to dine in this quiet spot, but it had been a long time since they had made the trip together, because of family cares.

Exactly what they said to each other as they went flying upstream, only another kingfisher could say and be sure of what he was talking about. They appeared to be quarreling, because their tones were so harsh. Father Kingfisher rattled away at Mother Kingfisher and she shrieked back at him: but they were not quarreling; that is the way kingfishers talk always, even to their babies. They are queer folk, there is no question about it.

This day Father Kingfisher perched on a dead branch over the water and Mother Kingfisher perched on another dead branch on a nearby tree. Both were motionless for a few seconds while they gazed intently into the pool below them. They were looking for fish. Mother Kingfisher saw the first one. Down she dropped to dive after that fish. There was a SPLASH! Then back to her tree Mother Kingfisher flew with a shining fish in her big beak. It was a little fish; she swallowed it quickly.

Then Father Kingfisher saw a fish and made a dive for it. He caught a big one and he and that big fish made a LOUD SPLASHING in the water. At last up to his perch flew Father Kingfisher with his shining fish in his beak. That big fish flopped and flapped so hard that Father Kingfisher had to give it two or three hard whacks against the tree before he could eat it.

It was hard work, but Father Kingfisher swallowed his fish. After he swallowed it he unswallowed it again if you please, and he kept swallowing and unswallowing his fish until he had it put away just right in his stomach. He looked so funny doing this it is a wonder Mother Kingfisher didn't laugh. She didn't even smile.

While Father Kingfisher and Mother Kingfisher were dining together that day for the first time in so long, an astonishing thing happened at home.

Usually there are from six to eight eggs in a kingfisher's nest: but Miss Elliot says there were only four children in this family. Miss Elliot knows; she saw the children in their nest.

Perhaps you understand about how kingfishers' nests are made. If you do you will wonder how Miss Elliot could see the babies. If you never saw a kingfisher's nest you should know that it is like a bank-swallow's nest, at the end of a tunnel in a bank, only bigger of course, because kingfishers are rather big birds.

Father and Mother Kingfishers' nest was in the river bank about six feet above the water. They came back to it year after year because they had worked hard to make the long tunnel which led to the prickly nest at the end, and they liked their old home. The reason why the nest was prickly is because it was lined with smelly old fish-bones instead of with soft grasses and feathers. The tunnel entrance was dark of course and the nest at the end was gloomy enough you may be sure.

However, the four babies were used to living in the dark. Probably when their mother told them about trees, and the river, and green fields, and blue sky, and the shining sun, and other sights that most baby birds in their nests see every day,—if indeed she tried to tell them, probably the baby kingfishers couldn't understand.

It was almost time for them to leave their nest too, and go fishing for themselves. That was why their father and mother could go away and have dinner together. They were sure no harm could come to four such big babies at home.

It is true that no real harm came to the little fellows, but when Miss Elliot came to call she gave them a terrible fright. When Miss Elliot found that kingfishers' nest she wished with all her heart to see how the babies behaved when they were at home. When she

looked in the tunnel, all she could see was a dark hole. She called to the babies but they didn't answer.

Home went Miss Elliot for her flashlight, and the alarming thing happened. Into the tunnel leading to the kingfishers' nest there suddenly came a great, blinding light.

Miss Elliot counted the frightened babies; there were four in the nest. She says they put their heads tight together and crowded closely one beside another, too frightened to make a sound. Their bright eyes seemed fairly popping out of their heads they were so filled with terror when the big, round, shining sun walked into their house like that!

You wouldn't think to look at Miss Elliot that she would do anything so impolite, but she did, and laughed about it. More than that, she called at the kingfishers' home the next day and the next; she brought friends with her and showed them the nest, just as if the house were hers.

One day, though, when Miss Elliot called with her flashlight, she discovered that there was nothing to be seen in the nest but smelly old fish-bones. The old folks had played a joke on her; they had taken the children away; and from a treetop Father Kingbird, in his handsome blue suit, was laughing at her.

Quick as a wink Miss Elliot turned her flashlight on him and he left in a hurry. Perhaps he told Mother Kingbird that—"No wonder the children were frightened—that great light was enough to scare any bird!"

The Fairy in Johnnie's Garden

BY GEORGE W. TUTTLE

OUR Johnnie says a fairy fine

Must in his garden walk,

For how, if fairy did not boost,

Could corn ears climb the stalk?

And then, the beans that line the pods

In cunning little rows,

How could they ever get inside?—

He's sure the fairy knows!

The Traveling Balloon

BY MARY S. STOVER

DEAN had gone up on the apartment house roof with his new red balloon. He and Edgar and Lee often played on the flat roof. Part of it was meant for a playground.

This time Dean wanted to be alone there. He was going to do something he did not like to have the boys know about. It was not anything wrong, but they might think it was queer. They laughed at everything they called queer.

Dean hadn't been on the roof ten minutes when up came the boys. His face turned red when he saw them. Lee came running.

"Quick? Can't you catch it?" he called.

"Catch what," asked Edgar, who had bent to tie his shoe lace.

"Dean's lost his balloon. I guess we startled him so that he let go the string."



THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

25 THIRD STREET,
EASTPORT, MAINE.

Dear Miss Buck:—I would like very much to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear its button. I go to the Unitarian church. My teacher's name is Mrs. Baltzly. We have a Club that meets every other Friday. The officers and members are as follows: President, Mrs. Baltzly; Vice-president, Warren Kane; Secretary, Noel Nutt; Treasurer, Charles Swett; Marshal, Wadsworth Raye.

Members: Donald and Bryan Leasuer, Daniel Hill, George Weston and William Haycock. Our dues are two cents. We have three dollars and twenty-one cents in the treasury.

I would like to have some of the boys of the Beacon Club write to me.

Sincerely yours,
CHARLES SWETT.

Dean's face turned redder. He swallowed hard. Maybe he ought to tell them something. Maybe it was just as well to keep still. Lee was *such* a tease!

The boys leaned over the little wall around the roof and watched Dean's balloon float away.

"It's a pretty sight. I wonder where it will come down. Likely in one of the trees in the park," said Lee.

"It might come down on the park lake. Wouldn't that be fun! I'd like to go over and watch what it does," said Edgar, "but there isn't time to go to the park and our other place, too."

"No, there isn't," said Lee. "Dean, Uncle Joe is going to take us all to visit the Children's Home. Let's hurry down."

Dean had wanted to watch his balloon longer, but he would not miss a chance to visit the Children's Home! He had often seen the outside. Today they went straight in through the big front doors. The first floor was quiet, but upstairs they heard glad shouts from the big east porch.

"See what just came to us!" called one boy. "It's our very own; the note says so."

"It sailed right to us!" cried another boy.

"What did?" asked Lee.

"This balloon!" They all pointed at a handsome red balloon which three of the boys held by the string.

"See the note," said another.

Lee and Edgar stared at it hard. Dean did not seem to be so curious. His face was red again. This was the note:

THIS BALLOON IS YOURS
WITH LOVE FROM DEAN

Lee thumped Dean on the back. "You queer boy!" he said. It sounded as if maybe he liked queer boys. Anyhow, Dean didn't mind. He had never expected to find where the balloon landed.

Here's a warm welcome to our first member from Alaska. Will our readers kindly note the request he makes?

BLUFF, VIA NOME, ALASKA.

Dear Miss Buck:—I am not a member yet of the Club, but we get *The Beacon* here through the kindness of some friends in the East. Where I live there is no Sunday School, but we depend on our friends for things to read. If any of the Club members have Story Books that would interest the Eskimo children here, I will gladly send Alaska Post Card Views in exchange for reading for the children.

Your friend,
WARREN MERRITT.

2021 BELLEVUE AVENUE,
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

Dear Miss Buck:—I go to the Unitarian Sunday school in Los Angeles. I have all the *Beacons* saved since May 20, 1923. I love to read *The Beacon* very much. I should like to become a member of the Beacon Club. I am eleven years old and am in the 8th grade.

Yours sincerely,
ELOISE WARNER.

He had just sent it off with the hope that it would please some other child.

It had made more than a dozen boys happy! Dean thought it was the jolliest balloon he ever saw.

Church School News

THE girls who are studying *From Desert to Temple* in our Unitarian Church at Wellesley Hills gave the first dramatic scene, "The Finding of the Spring," in the Parish House on Palm Sunday at five o'clock, under the direction of the superintendent of the school, Mrs. Paul Dove. The scene was painted and a palm tree at the front of the stage was devised by an artist in the church. Music for the "Well Song" was written for the occasion by the minister of the church. The effective setting, the earnestness of the girls who represented the characters, and the skill shown made the presentation one of genuine religious significance. The scene was followed with an address by the Editor of *The Beacon*, and good fellowship was enjoyed during the supper hour. The event called out a large number of the friends of the school, parents and members of the congregation.

On the same day, in Baltimore, a group of seventh-grade pupils, boys and girls, gave another of the dramatic scenes from the same book, "The Kingdom Divided." The superintendent, Miss Emilio, read the Bible passage which tells the story of the play, and later gave a few words of explanation and read the cast of characters. Between the two scenes the church organist played a selection of oriental music, and at the end No. 17 in the Hymn and Tune Book, words and tune from the Jewish ritual, was sung. The same school will give a pageant on Children's Day, prepared by Miss Emilio, which will include dramatic presentation of three of the parables.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA LXIII.

I am composed of 15 letters.
My 13, 5, 9, is a bright object.
My 2, 10, 17, is a fowl.
My 7, 15, 4, 9, is a large animal.
My 8, 14, 19, is frozen water.
My 12, 16, 3, 6, belong to all animals.
My 18, 11, 7, 1, is a young animal.
My *whole* is a most interesting book.

ROBERT EDDY.

ENIGMA LXIV

I am composed of 15 letters.
My 5, 2, 3, 4, some call good fortune.
My 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, is to hasten.
My 7, 13, 14, is a receptacle.
My 12, 3, 7, is a lie.
My 15, 6, 3, 4, is part of the body.
My 9, 6, 8, 12, is a ridge of rock or sand.
My *whole* is a well-known boy hero in fiction.

H. P. S.

PI PUZZLE

"O herotrb nmal dolf ot yth taehr hyt rohbert,
rhewie tyip swelld het capee fo dGo si rehet,
ot owrpshi higtyrl si ot voel heca rehot,
chae liesm a mynh, cach dknlyl eded a yearrp."

E. A. C.

END-LETTER CHANGES.

A pleasant place for picnics;
A partner tried and true;
To peel a peach or apple;
Division is a clue.

In body strong and healthy;
The next, a disk of light;
A passage in a building;
A stop of action's right.

A sort of clay deposit;
A market-place is classed;
A proper name for women;
A planet is the last.

Firelight.

A DIAMOND.

1. A consonant.
2. An evergreen tree.
3. A drink made from a fruit.
4. A color.
5. A consonant.

JOHN E. BECK.

CHARADE

"Get up," said my *first* as he looked in my room,
Dispelling the night with its o'erspreading gloom.
"I'll *second* you such an example that you
Till my *whole* will be busy."

Now where is the clue?

P. R. HAZARD.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 30.

ENIGMA LIX.—Worcester.

ENIGMA L.—Let your light so shine.

HEADS AND TAILS.—Scar, cars, Amen, name.

HIDDEN NAMES OF BOYS AND GIRLS.—Boys.

1. Will. 2. Ben. 3. Ned. 4. Frank. 5. Tom.
6. Fred. 7. George. 8. Edward. 9. Bob. Girls.
1. Helen. 2. Edith. 3. Grace. 4. Eliza. 5. Elsie.
6. Ruth. 7. Esther.

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REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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